



STATE SENATOR • LIZ BRATER • 18TH DISTRICT

# Brater Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • Toll-free 866-305-0318  
E-mail: [senlbrater@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:senlbrater@senate.michigan.gov) • 517-373-2406 • Fax: 517-373-5679

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 2, 2003

CONTACT: Sen. Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor)  
(517) 373-2406

## **SENATOR BRATER FIGHTS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS**

(LANSING)—State Senator Liz Brater (D-Ann Arbor) voted yesterday to oppose Republican sponsored legislation that would eliminate the professional development requirement for Michigan’s teachers. The legislation passed the Senate on a straight party-line vote.

“How can we expect our educators to raise the standards in our schools if we eliminate opportunities for them to enhance their professional skills?” said Brater. “Quality education is the key to our state’s future. We have to give our teachers the best possible tools to effectively educate our children. Doing anything less would be irresponsible.”

Research shows that improving teacher knowledge and teaching skills is essential to raising student performance. A Harvard University study of 900 school districts found that teacher expertise, which includes professional development, accounts for 40 percent of the difference in student achievement in reading and math.

“The most effective way to improve the achievement of our students is to improve the quality of the teaching,” said Brater. “It is naïve to believe that eliminating professional development mandates will not hurt our schools and the quality of education in Michigan. I’m very disappointed that this legislation passed the Senate today.”

**- MORE -**

Senator Liz Brater represents Senate District 18, which includes the Cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, the Villages of Barton Hills, Chelsea, and Dexter and the following Townships: Ann Arbor, Augusta, Dexter, Freedom, Lima, Lyndon, Northfield, Salem, Scio, Sharon, Superior, Sylvan, Webster, and Ypsilanti. She is the minority vice chair of the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee and the Agriculture, Forestry, and Tourism Committee. In February 2003, Senator Brater was appointed by Governor Granholm to serve on the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council. Senator Brater is known statewide as a leader on environmental issues.

**Editor's Note: Sen. Brater's most recent photo is available for download at the following link: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/dem/Graphics/pressphotos/SD18BraterPortrait.jpg>**

#####